

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAIRO 02549 241608Z

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ACTION SY-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCCT-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 USSS-00 DRC-01 /095 W

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R 241345Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6324

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CONFIDENTIAL CAIRO 2549

FOR RSO BEIRUT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, PINS

SUBJECT: ACADEMY PLOT AND POSSIBLE FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES

REF: A. CAIRO 2499; B. CAIRO 2521

1. ADMIN OFF MET TODAY WITH SENIOR OFFICER OF STATE SECURITY DIVISION IN ATTEMPT GAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING POSSIBLE FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES. OFFICER TOLD ADMIN OFF THAT SECURITY HAD HEARD OF A THREAT INVOLVING FOREIGN EMBASSIES A FEW WEEKS AGO AND HAD STRENGTHENED SECURITY MEASURES AROUND EMBASSIES AT THAT TIME.

2. ADMIN OFF ASKED OFFICIAL WHETHER THE THREAT WAS SPECIFICALLY AIMED AGAINST THE AMERICANS OR WERE THERE OTHER EMBASSIES INVOLVED. HE SAID THAT SAUDIS AND SOME EUROPEAN EMBASSIES HAD ALSO BEEN MENTIONED. (WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY SAUDI EMBOFF THAT GOE ADVISED THEIR SECURITY BE STRENGTHENED ON APRIL 22 AND UK EMBASSY APPEARS TO HAVE ACQUIRED CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CAIRO 02549 241608Z

ADDITIONAL PERIMETER GUARDS). HE DID NOT RESPOND

WHEN ASKED IF GERMANS AND ITALIANS WERE ALSO TARGETED.

3. IN EXPLANATION FOR POSSIBILITY INCREASED

FEDAYEEN ACTIONS IN EGYPT, HE MENTIONED THAT THE FIVE PALESTINIANS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROME MASSACRE WERE STILL BEING HELD IN AN EGYPTIAN PRISON AND THE FEDAYEEN WERE CONCERNED WITH THIS AS WELL AS SECRETARY'S SUCCESSES IN ME DIPLOMACY.

4. ADMIN OFF ASKED IF ATTACK ON MILITARY TECHNICAL ACADEMY WAS IN ANY WAY ASSOCIATED WITH THE FEDAYEEN THREAT AND ALSO WHETHER THE SECRETARY'S VISIT COULD BE AFFECTED BY THE THREAT. OFFICIAL SAID THAT INVESTIGATION OF THE ACADEMY PLOT HAD DISCLOSED THAT THE PLOTTERS PLANS INCLUDED THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES FROM A FOREIGN EMBASSY TO USE AS ESCAPE PAWNS, SHOULD THE MAIN GROUP OF ACADEMY PLOTTERS FAIL AND BE CAPTURED. HE LINKED THE PLAN TO TAKE HOSTAGES WITH THE EARLIER REPORT OF POSSIBLE FEDAYEEN ACTIVITIES, BUT CLAIMED THAT SINCE ALL THE ACADEMY PLOTTERS WERE NOW UNDER ARREST, THE SPECIFIC THREAT OF WHICH WE WERE WARNED YESTERDAY BY MFA NO LONGER EXISTED.

5. OFFICIAL WENT ON TO DESCRIBE ACADEMY PLOT AS FOLLOWS: HE SAID THAT LEADER OF THE PLOT WAS A STRONG PERSONALITY OF PALESTINIAN ORIGIN WHO HELD AN IRAQI PASSPORT AND WHO HAS BEEN IN EGYPT FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS. HE STARTED RECRUITING HIS FOLLOWERS WHO WERE FANATICAL YOUNG EGYPTIAN MUSLIMS ABOUT A YEAR AGO. ADMIN OFF ASKED IF FOLLOWERS WERE MEMBERS OF MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD OF THE SORT THAT HAD MADE TROUBLE AT CAIRO UNIVERSITY A YEAR OR SO AGO AND OFFICIAL REPLIED THAT THEY WERE NOT MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD. HE SAID THEY WERE MORE LIKE THE "NEW MUSLIM LEFT" AND THAT THESE YOUNG PEOPLE DID NOT REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS BEHIND THE PLOT. HE SAID THE PLOTTERS' PLAN AS TO TAKE OVER THE ACADEMY, OBTAIN "WEAPONS" AND THEN ATTACK THE ASU HEADQUARTERS WHILE PRESIDENT SADAT WAS PRESENTING CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CAIRO 02549 241608Z

HIS "OCTOBER PAPER", TAKING HIM AS WELL AS OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS PRESENT HOSTAGE. IF THIS PLAN FAILED, A SECOND GROUP WAS TO TAKE HOSTAGES FROM A FOREIGN EMBASSY AND USE THEM TO BARGAIN FOR THE RELEASE OF THE MAIN GROUP. THIS SECOND GROUP WAS IDENTIFIED DURING THE INVESTIGATION AND ALL PLOTTERS TOTALING APPROXIMATELY 100 HAVE BEEN ARRESTED.

6. ADMIN OFF ASKED OFFICIAL IF IT IS TRUE THAT LIBYANS WERE BEHIND PLOT. HE REPLIED THAT INVESTIGATIONS ARE STILL NOT COMPLETE, BUT IT CLEARLY IS AN OUTSIDE PLOT. THE LEADER IS A FOREIGNER. HE HAD HE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, HE COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN OVER THE LEADERSHIP. IN CLOSING THE DISCUSSION HE SAID "IT COULD EVEN HAVE BEEN THE RUSSIANS."

7. COMMENT: MOST OF THE DETAILS GIVEN BY THIS OFFICIAL GENERALLY CORRESPOND TO WHAT WE HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES AS REPORTED IN REF B BUT IS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE HEARD THE SOVIETS MENTIONED AS THE POSSIBLE CULPRIT. DESPITE ASSURANCES SECURITY THREAT REMOVED WITH ARREST OF CONSPIRATORS, WE NOTE TIGHTENED SECURITY PRECAUTIONS AROUND VARIOUS SENSITIVE GOE BUILDINGS AND EMBASSIES (INCLUDING OUR OWN) REMAIN IN FULL EFFECT.
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